

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To: Caroline Pulley - Development Control Case Officer

Reference: P/20/0288

From: Planning Policy and Implementation Section

Ask for: David James

Extension: 7053

Date: 16th December 2020

Summary

No objection raised. The development meets the relevant Replacement LDP policies (SW1, SW2, SW3, and SW4).

If minded to approve in principle, particular consideration should be given to the impact of the development on open space provision, the character of the area, the impact on the surrounding residents and occupiers in terms of noise and disturbance, traffic generation and parking provision (Policies SW10, SW11, SW12, and EnW4).

Additionally, the requirements of Policy SW9 should be noted.

Observations in respect of the above proposal

1. Proposed Development

The proposal is for the demolition of an existing building, and the construction of four buildings comprising two bungalows, 8 flats and two dwellings, with landscaping, car parking, drainage arrangements and a new play area, at the site Of Former St Luke's Church, Lansbury Road, Swansea Road.

2. Development Plan Framework

The existing development plan framework in Merthyr Tydfil is provided by:-

The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (2016 - 2031)

The relevant LDP Objectives are:-

- *LDP Objective 1 Sustainable Population Growth: To encourage a sustainable level and distribution of population growth.*
- *LDP Objective 2 Welsh Language and Culture: To protect and enhance Welsh language and culture.*
- *LDP Objective 3 To ensure the sufficient provision of land for the delivery of a range and choice of housing and affordable housing to address local housing needs.*
- *LDP Objective 4 Regeneration: To promote the suitable reuse of previously developed land and the continued regeneration of local communities.*
- *LDP Objective 5 Infrastructure: To ensure that community infrastructure and open space supports the regeneration of local communities.*

- *LDP Objective 6 Sustainable Design: To promote high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and support measures which mitigate the predicted effects of climate change.*
- *LDP Objective 7 Transport: To support an integrated transport system, promote active travel and ensure new developments are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport links.*
- *LDP Objective 8 Community Facilities: To support existing community facilities and suitable community led development.*
- *LDP Objective 9 Heritage and Cultural Assets: To protect, enhance and promote all heritage, historic and cultural assets.*
- *LDP Objective 10 Biodiversity: To improve ecosystem resilience and connectivity which support habitats and species of principle importance.*

The following development plan policies would apply:-

- *Policy SW1: Provision of New Homes*
- *Policy SW2: Provision of Affordable Housing*
- *Policy SW3: Sustainably Distributing New Homes*
- *Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries*
- *Policy SW9: Planning Obligations*
- *Policy SW10: Protecting and Improving Open Spaces*
- *Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking*
- *Policy SW12: Improving the Transport Network*
- *Policy SW13: Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities*
- *Policy CW1: Historic Environment*
- *Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation & Ecosystem Resilience*
- *Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection*

The following supplementary planning guidance is applicable:-

- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 1: Affordable Housing (March 2012)*
- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2: Planning Obligations (March 2012)*
- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4: Sustainable Design (July 2013)*
- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 5: Nature & Development (May 2015)*

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, December 2018)

Planning Policy Wales provide guidance on matters relevant to this application, namely:

- **Placemaking in Action: Good Design Making Better Places**
- **Strategic Placemaking: Previously Developed Land**
- **Moving within & between Places: Transport**
- **Living in a Place: Housing**
- **Recognising the Special Characteristics of Places: The Historic Environment**

3. Policy Considerations

The site of the proposal is located within the Primary Growth Area (Policies SW1, and SW3), as defined by the LDP, and within the settlement boundary where development will be allowed subject to the proposals compatibility with other plan policies and material considerations (Policy SW4). The proposal – a residential development and new play area – would therefore be supported in principal as an acceptable use in this location.

Policy SW2 states that development proposals will be expected to deliver a number of affordable dwellings across the County Borough, during the plan period, in order to contribute to the identified level of housing need. The proposal comprises 12 new residential units, all of which will be affordable units. This would represent a contribution to the 253 affordable units that are required during the plan period. Additionally, the supporting text of Policy SW2 advises that residential developments in the primary growth area should provide 10% affordable housing within their schemes. This requirement has obviously been exceeded, as all the new units will be affordable. As such, the proposal complies with Policy SW2.

Policy SW9 relates to planning obligations and states that planning obligations will be sought for the on site provision of at least 10% affordable housing in the Primary Growth area, on sites of 10 houses or more. As mentioned above, this requirement is exceeded. Additionally, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), will be applicable for the proposal, at £25 per sq m. Furthermore, the proposal includes the provision of a new play area/area of open space, to replace the existing play area, which would be lost as part of the proposal. As such, this is considered to satisfy criteria 3 of Policy SW9, which requires the provision of open space of sites of 10 houses or more.

Policy SW10 states that development proposals that improve the quality, quantity or access to open space will generally be supported. Development proposals that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on or result in a loss of open space will not be permitted unless:

- It would not cause or exacerbate a deficiency of open space in accordance with the Council's open space standards or;
- The majority of the open space can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site or;
- Satisfactory equivalent community benefit or enhanced compensatory provision can be provided in accordance with the Council's open space standards and
- In all cases, the open space has no significant nature or historic conservation importance.

In this respect, it is acknowledged that a small existing play area would be lost as part of the proposal. However, the development would include, a new larger play/open space area in close proximity to that which would be lost. As such, the development satisfies the third criterion above, and would therefore comply with Policy SW10. The Council's Landscape Architect and Ecologist should be consulted, to ascertain whether the open space being lost has any relevant significant importance.

Policy SW11 requires new development to, among other things:

- be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density;

- integrate effectively with adjacent spaces, the public realm and historic environment to enhance the general street scene and create good quality townscape;
- not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or privacy, or visual impact, and incorporate a good standard of landscape design;
- contribute to the provision of green infrastructure, including open space in accordance with the Council's standards, sustainable drainage systems where appropriate, and ensure that the County Borough's network of green infrastructure is accessible and connected;
- allow access for the widest range of people possible, and demonstrate that any traffic movements will not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and satisfy the Council's parking standards.
- incorporate a range of inclusive/adaptable design specifications, a mix of house types, tenures and sizes to meet identified local needs;
- incorporate resource efficient/adaptable buildings and layouts using sustainable design and construction techniques;
- minimise the demand for energy and utilise renewable energy resources;
- provide and protect relevant utility services and infrastructure without causing any unacceptable environmental impacts;
- incorporate measures to improve ground and surface water quality wherever possible.

Considering the location of the application site, in close proximity to existing dwellings, and other uses, including commercial uses, careful consideration should be given to these issues. The proposal would comprise a range of house types, including bungalows, flats and houses. The submitted plans indicate that the development would have off-street parking provision. As such, the proposed parking provision should be checked against the Council's current parking standards, and the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.

Policy SW12 supports development that encourages a modal shift towards sustainable transport, including the enhancement of pedestrian, cycle, rail and bus facilities, in addition to any necessary road improvements. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of sustainable transport. As such, the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.

Policy CW1 advises that the integrity of our historic environment assets will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated they would preserve or enhance the architectural quality, character or the historic or cultural importance of our designated historic environment assets. Development affecting undesignated historic environment assets including, locally listed buildings or structures, Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales, Urban Character Areas (UCA) and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas should have regard to their special character and archaeological importance.

The site lies within the Merthyr Tydfil Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, and within Urban Character Area (UCA) 9 – West Merthyr, including Heolgerrig and Gellideg. As such, the views of the appropriate Officer should be sought, to ensure the proposal complies with Policy CW1.

Policy EnW1 states that Development proposals will be required to promote the resilience of ecosystems. In particular, proposals will be required to maintain and enhance biodiversity interests unless it can be demonstrated that:

1. The need for the development clearly outweighs the biodiversity value of the site; and
2. The impacts of the development can be satisfactorily mitigated and acceptably managed through future management regimes.

The view of the Council's Ecologist should be sought in this respect.

Policy EnW4 advises that development proposals will be required to demonstrate they will not result in an unacceptable impact on people, residential amenity, property and / or the natural environment from either:

- Pollution of land, surface water, ground water and the air;
- Land contamination;
- Hazardous substances;
- Land stability;
- Noise, vibration, dust, odour nuisance and light pollution; or
- Any other identified risk to public health and safety.

Where impacts are identified the Council will require applicants to demonstrate that appropriate measures have been incorporated to reduce, or minimise the impact identified to the lowest possible acceptable level. Planning conditions may be imposed or legal obligation entered into, to secure any necessary mitigation and monitoring processes. With regard to flood risk, new developments will be expected to avoid unnecessary flood risk and meet the requirements of TAN 15. As such, the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.